

have found it expounded at length in a work with which he must be familiar—in Hertzka's *Gesetze der Sozialen Entwicklung*.

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CIVIL GOVERNMENT IN THE UNITED STATES CONSIDERED WITH SOME REFERENCE TO ITS ORIGIN. By JOHN FISKE. Pp. 360. Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1890.

MR. FISKE has in this volume undertaken to give a clear and comprehensive account of the development of civil government in the United States in so elementary a form that it might be found useful as a text-book in the schools of the country. This is a far more difficult task than the preparation of an exhaustive treatise upon the science of government, even though the writer may have an inexhaustible store of knowledge to draw from. In the preparation of an elementary treatise on any subject, the author must confine himself in large measure to generalizations, for a descent to details would destroy the elementary character of the book; and, of course, the value of the book depends altogether upon the accuracy of the generalizations. And the difficulty is trebled if one attempts to give the elementary treatise a popular character, the great danger being that, in the attempt to popularize, inaccurate statements and half truths are presented to the reader.

In the main the volume before us satisfies all reasonable expectations, and in many parts the treatment is truly admirable. Mr. Fiske's well-known felicity of expression enables him to give to his discussion of these subjects a popular character without sacrificing scientific accuracy. His order of discussion of the subdivisions of the subject is also sound and proper. Beginning with the lowest or simplest governmental organization—the township—he discusses in succession the county, the city, the State, and the Federal Union. After a general examination of this part

of the work I have but one criticism to offer, viz.: that in his desire to avoid the error of other popular writers on civil government, of passing over untouched the subjects of township and county organizations, Mr. Fiske has perhaps devoted more space to these subjects than was advisable in view of the limited compass of his book. But this is a minor error, if error it be at all. And even if the space given to the treatment of the State and Federal Union be considered too limited, portrayal of the development of these organizations merits nothing but commendation.

The value of the volume to both student and teacher is greatly increased by the addition of well-digested questions on the text, and of a bibliography and suggestions for a more extensive discussion in the class-room.

The chapter on "Written Constitutions" is very good as far as it goes, and perhaps for a popular treatise or textbook the discussion of the subject is carried far enough. But it occurred to me that a hint should have been given to the student of the limitations upon the operations of written constitutions occasioned by the influence of public opinion and the demands of private interest. It may, however, be true that the class of readers for whom this book was principally intended would not appreciate the philosophical reflections involved in a consideration of this part of the subject.

The only serious fault to be found with the author's treatment of the general subject of his book is in the first chapter. If the reader knew nothing of the functions of government when he began to read this chapter, he would, at the conclusion of it, believe that the one essential primary function of government is taxation. Taxation is undoubtedly an essential function of the government, but it is only essential, because without it government cannot be maintained. But the fundamental purpose of government, as Mr. Fiske shows incidentally in the succeeding pages, is the protection of the individual and of society against the

attacks of evil-designing persons, and the furtherance of their common interests.

The few defects here pointed out are more than counter-balanced by the substantial merits of the book, and I have no hesitation in pronouncing it to be one of the best, if not the most successful of, attempts to write a popular and elementary treatise on civil government. It is, in my judgment, eminently adapted to use in the schools of this country.

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L'ÉCOLE NOUVELLE; Conference faite à Genève, le 28 Mars, 1890. Par M. CHARLES GIDE, Professeur d'Economie politique à l'Université de Montpellier. Tiré de l'ouvrage intitulé *Quatre Écoles d'Economie Sociale* publié par la Société Chrétienne Suisse d'Economie Sociale. Genève: Imprimerie Me. Richter, Rue des Voirons 10; 1890.

WHAT is the New School of Political Economy? Not everyone can tell us clearly, and few have actually told us in so delightful a manner as has Professor Gide in this pamphlet. After defining the school in a negative way, and indicating the diversities that exist within it, the author gives a positive description of its governing ideas. He recounts the actual experiences of an independent thinker educated under some of the leaders of the older schools. Liberty as the one supreme ideal, governments aiming to render themselves useless, an evolution carrying us toward, if not to, the very "madness of freedom"—such were some of the ideas impressed on students twenty years ago. Time has sifted these ideas; and admirably does Professor Gide indicate the evils that have come from an economic freedom that has been too successfully "let alone." The services that governments need to render to the public are increasing, and it is possible to designate points in which farther public action needs to supplant private action, if social progress is to be insured.

In method the New School diverges from the beaten